

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 25 with the following amended paragraph:

Passive electronic television program guides typically provide a scrolling or paging list of program listings on a dedicated television channel. The ~~TV Guide~~ TV GUIDE® Channel is a passive program guide in which viewers are presented with promotional videos or trailers in one portion of the screen and program listings in another.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 23 with the following amended paragraph:

When a user selects such an icon, a point-of-purchase window may be displayed in which purchase information for the product or service may be displayed. When a user completes a purchase, a full-screen display of the passive video product or conventional program may be redisplayed. Alternatively, a user may be provided with an opportunity to order other merchandise from, for example, a ~~TV Guide~~ TV GUIDE® Store.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 21 with the following amended paragraph:

Distribution facility 16 may have screen generator 117 for generating passive video product display screens containing videos and data. Screen generator 117 may be implemented using any suitable hardware, software, or combination thereof. Screen generator 117, may be, for

example, a ~~Windows NT~~ WINDOWS NT® operating system process running on a personal computer with a ~~Pentium II~~ PENTIUM® II microprocessor.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 23 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 2b shows an illustrative arrangement for application equipment 17 in a client-server based or distributed interactive program guide system. The approach shown in FIG. 2b may also be used to provide other applications. As shown in FIG. 2b, distribution equipment 21 may include application server 25. Application server 25 may be any suitable software, hardware, or combination thereof for providing a client-server based program guide. Application server 25 may, for example, run a suitable database engine (e.g., SQL Server by MICROSOFT®) and provide program guide data, passive guide characteristics, or any suitable combination thereof, in response to queries generated by a program guide client implemented on user television equipment 22. Alternatively, application server 25 may poll the program guide client and provide data when necessary. If desired, application server 25 may be located at main facility 12 or some other location (not shown).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 8 with the following amended paragraph:

A program guide or other application client running on user television equipment 22 may retrieve program guide data, passive guide characteristics, or any

suitable combination thereof, from application server 25 using any suitable client-server based approach. The program guide client may, for example, pass SQL requests as messages to application server 25. In another suitable approach, the program guide or other application may invoke remote procedures that reside on application server 25 using one or more remote procedure calls. Application server 25 may execute SQL statements for such invoked remote procedures. In still another suitable approach, client objects executed by the program guide may communicate with server objects executed by application server 25 using, for example, an object request broker (ORB). This may involve using, for example, MICROSOFT®'s Distributed Component Object Model (DCOM®) approach.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 16 with the following amended paragraph:

An illustrative arrangement for user television equipment 22 is shown in FIG. 3. As shown, user television equipment 22 may receive video signals and data from distribution facility 16 or application server 25 at input 26. During normal television viewing, a viewer may tune set-top box 28 to a desired television channel. The signal for that television channel may then be provided at video output 30. The signal supplied at output 30 may be a radio-frequency (RF) signal on a predefined channel (e.g., channel 3 or 4), an analog demodulated video signal, a digital signal provided to television 36 on an appropriate digital bus (e.g., a bus using the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE®) 1394 standard, (not

shown)), or any other suitable output. The video signal at output 30 is received by optional secondary storage device 32.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 24, line 7 with the following amended paragraph:

Digital storage device 31 can be contained in set-top box 28 or it can be an external device connected to set-top box 28 via an output port and appropriate interface. Digital storage device 31 may, for example, be contained in a local media server. If necessary, processing circuitry in set-top box 28 formats the received video, audio and data signals into a digital file format. Preferably, the file format is an open file format such as the Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) MPEG-2 standard or the Moving Joint Photographic Experts Group (MJPEG) standard. The resulting data is streamed to digital storage device 31 via an appropriate bus (e.g., a bus using the Institute Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE[®]) 1394 standard), and is stored on digital storage device 31. In another suitable approach, an MPEG-2 data stream or series of files may be received from distribution equipment 21 (FIGS. 2a-2d) and stored.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 29 with the following amended paragraph:

The user may access a passive video product from an interactive guide or other software. If desired, the interactive guide or other software may include one or more branded screen elements, such as illustrative branded menu

feature 505, to provide the user with an opportunity to access a passive video product. In this example, the user is provided with an opportunity to access the ~~TV Guide~~ TV GUIDE® Channel, a passive guide, directly from menu 102. In response to the user selecting branded feature 505, the interactive guide or other software may tune the user's equipment (e.g., television 36 or personal computer 231) to the channel on which the passive guide is carried.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 36, line 15 with the following amended paragraph:

When the user selects such an icon, an interactive guide or other software may display a point-of-purchase window in which purchase information for the product or service is displayed. When the user completes the purchase, the guide or other software may return to full-screen display of the passive video product or conventional program. Alternatively, the user may be provided with an opportunity to order other merchandise from, for example, a ~~TV Guide~~ TV GUIDE® Store.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 38, line 8 with the following amended paragraph:

Comparing FIGS. 11a-11c illustrates how advertiser sponsorship may be combined with interactive impulse-purchase fulfillment. A passive video product segment may be sponsored, for example, by ~~DiGiorno~~ DIGIORNO® and feature an interview with Papa John's Pizza (FIG. 11a). If interactive content is available for the segment, interactive software may display an alert icon

1100 (FIG. 11b). In response to a user selecting alert icon 1100, the interactive software may display the interactive content. In this example, the interactive content may be a recipe for Papa John's Pizza (FIG. 11c). Point-of-purchase window 1120 may be displayed to allow the user to order products associated with the interactive content, in this example, ingredients for the recipe. Window 1120 may include an advertisement for the provider of the ingredients, in this example, Peapod Grocery Delivery Service. This approach may provide for a three-way sale of advertisements. DiGierne DIGIORNO®, Papa John's, and Pea Pod may each advertise in connection with impulse-purchase fulfillment. Moreover, as in this example, the advertisers may be selected to be complimentary to one another and may interact synergistically, thereby enhancing the advertising value of the individual advertisements.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 40, line 11 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 12 is a flowchart of illustrative steps involved in providing selectable options within interactive applications that allow users to access passive video products (e.g., a barker channel, passive guide, or other passive video product). At step 1200, the system may provide an interactive menu of options such as, for example, an interactive program guide, home shopping, or other menu. The interactive menu may include a selectable option for the passive video product (step 1210). The option may be branded to indicate the name or source of the

passive video product (e.g., branded "The TV Guide TV
GUIDE® Channel" as shown in FIG. 5).